



Milwaukee County

Supervisor Johnny L. Thomas, 18th District
Vice-Chair, Finance & Audit Committee

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THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S "WIZARD OF OZ" BUDGETING

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Supervisor Johnny L. Thomas released the following statement regarding funding for public safety in Milwaukee County:

“Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain,” bellowed the Wizard of Oz, as Toto yanked away the fabric hiding the puffed-up little man. In a modern-day version of the famous book and movie, it appears that Sheriff David Clarke, Jr., has notified County Executive Scott Walker, Milwaukee County’s equivalent to the Wizard, that protecting the citizens of Milwaukee County is extremely difficult under the budget drawn up by Walker.

“The County Executive’s tactics require each department to make a lump sum across-the-board reduction in expenditures based not upon each department’s needs, but instead upon an arbitrary percentage. First, it was the County’s Department of Administrative Services and the Chief Judge that sounded the alarm, anticipating that their newly-adopted budgets would fall way out of balance. Now, it’s the Sheriff. Most of his corrective actions to get back to a balanced budget appear to be detrimental to the mission of properly housing convicted lawbreakers and of pushing them toward rehabilitation, including reduced assessment of inmates, alcohol and drug treatment, job seeking and Print Shop training. This doesn’t even include the eight furlough days imposed on deputies.

“Looking at the bigger picture within Milwaukee County, it appears that some of the County Executive’s lieutenants – including his department heads – are either complicit in his charade or duped by it. Submitting unrealistic budget estimates for the purpose of passing budgets that pretend to save taxpayers money is a nasty habit. Imagine the destruction he and his habit could wreak at the State level should he be elected Governor. Let’s get Scott Walker out from behind the curtain and make sure he doesn’t harm our Emerald City any further.”

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